

## FASIG Spring Meeting

17 April 2023, 5pm-6pm  
Online (Zoom)

### Minutes

**Present:** Robert Janaway (Chair), Sabrina Ki (Secretary), Laura Evis (Treasurer), Alistair Vannan (OCM), Denise Hillier (OCM), Deborah Ryder (OCM)

Agenda Point		Action (Initials)
1.	<p><b>Apologies</b> None received.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> These were accepted without changes.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>AV reported that today ClfA decided to sever the constitutional link between FASIG and the Expert Panel (EP), meaning the EP is no longer part of FASIG. For many years there had been some confusion over why the EP was basically a subset of FASIG when they are quite different.</p> <p>ClfA had become concerned last year due to FASIG being at risk of dissolving, which would lead to the EP being dissolved.</p> <p>This change does not cause any real issues for FASIG as the two groups have normally operated separately anyway. RJ agrees that this does not seem like something worth pushing back on. AV adds that the constitutional link had not meant that the EP was really functionally part of FASIG.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Advisory Council Feedback</b></p> <p>Advisory Council Rep (LE) reported that the Advisory Council's main concern was around archaeology graduates. There is not much of a feedback loop between universities and commercial archaeology companies, and graduates are not registering as ClfA members.</p> <p>There was nothing much from the Advisory Council currently affecting FASIG.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Group Documentation</b></p> <p><b>Annual Budget request form:</b> ClfA has currently neither confirmed nor denied the budget allocation.</p> <p><b>Annual Report:</b> committee can assist the Secretary to complete this by August about the previous year.</p>	

	When complete please send to Meg at Megan.Keates@archaeologists.net.	SK
6.	<p><b>Field Event/Workshop (July/August?)</b></p> <p>LE and RJ agreed it would be best to have the event in an external location that is not university-related. There is the possibility of asking organisations for assistance: LE has spoken with Cotswold Archaeology and asked if they would have a place for FASIG to hold such an event, e.g. about geophysics, and as a thank you Cotswold Archaeology could be included in the event.</p> <p>AV asked what kind of facilities Cotswold Archaeology have, LE mentioned that they have some rural sites where FASIG could put graves in, depending on which office we use. In some locations Cotswold Archaeology have local farmers that they collaborate with.</p> <p>DR offered to help as they work very close to Kemble (Cotswold Archaeology's Cirencester office). RJ agreed that Kemble is a good central location that would not be too far to travel to.</p> <p>Event date-wise, it was decided that it would be most important to ensure the organisers' availability. AV raised the point that the summer holidays are usually July to mid-August, and that the event date should also consider who the delegates are likely to be. July crop rotation dates should also be avoided. A one-day event would be best to avoid accommodation costs.</p> <p><i>AV will ask on FASIG's behalf if any members of the Expert Panel would be interested in doing training.</i></p> <p>DH has upcoming surgeries so may not be able to attend in person but will assist the planning. DR should be free apart from the first week of July, and would be able to do weekdays or weekends. RJ would not be able to do w/c 24th July. AV may struggle to attend in person due to school holidays but will try to attend, and will help with planning concept, delivery, etc.</p> <p>Another issue was raised about how to frame the event - rather than CPD, it was decided that the event should be presented as awareness training/introduction about how forensic archaeology is done, main techniques, etc. If it is presented as CPD, there is a concern that delegates may feel like the workshop would qualify them to attend scenes.</p> <p>After some discussion, there was a consensus that surface scene survey would work better for this event than excavation-centred activities. It would be simpler logistically and more achievable as a one-day activity. especially being the first that FASIG has run. Future activities could be scaled up (LE). This kind of event would be good to refresh for those with some experience, and also attract those new to forensic archaeology.</p>	AV

A surface deposition theme would be able to cover the important information e.g. contamination, chain of custody, health and safety, etc. but avoids the need to spend lots of time digging massive holes (RJ, DR). Plastic skeletons could also be borrowed from universities. The complexity of surface deposition scenes can also be varied to suit different levels of ability and experience (RJ). This would be a more flexible activity than grave scenes.

RJ mentioned that they had done activities around concealment in fly tip rubbish with Master's students, which covered learning about stratigraphy but didn't require digging mass graves. AV agreed that an event around surface survey would be good for raising awareness around easily overlooked things at ground level, versus the classic clandestine burials. RJ also suggested including 'minimum number of individuals' (e.g. odd number of ulnae) issues in the event.

Another issue discussed was whether the event would involve Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for delegates, which FASIG would then have to provide. This would likely incur a hefty cost, as well as create probably unnecessary waste and environmental concerns. LE suggested using boiler suits to represent PPE and mentioned it is possible to apply for funding to aid events, but there is no guarantee. The trainers may also need FASIG to pay them as we would not want them to be out of pocket. AV suggested that if PPE is worn it may be best to be all or nothing, as otherwise we could just have a conversation about PPE. AV also mentioned that the event could have scene tents.

RJ asked if FASIG could ask PPE suppliers if they might sponsor the event.

*LE will ask CIfA if this is permitted, outline the kind of event we want to do, what we need, ask if CIfA would be able to fund this or if we would need to ask an external company for funding, and check if this event needs to be under CIfA's insurance.*

Another concern to bear in mind is the ratio of delegates to trainers, and the provision of welfare facilities e.g. toilets, shelter for lunch (AV). Some Cotswold Archaeology sites have such facilities already depending on location. AV also raised whether the event should be for FASIG members only, with a maximum number of delegates. RJ suggested a registration of interest with a cap on numbers. LE mentioned that the event might draw more people if it is practical and reasonably priced, as university events similar to this are always oversubscribed with a waitlist.

RJ asked what others think would be the best representation of good practice, as there may be logistical issues in getting certain equipment e.g. single station. AV suggested that some things can be done nominally, i.e. demonstrate one thing and describe other examples - dependent on who and what is available to do training/demos. LE agrees that this can show Forensic Archaeologists have a toolbox of techniques that needs to be adapted to situation/terrain.

	<p>RJ pointed out that this will give new information even to people with strong archaeology fieldwork experience (not necessarily forensic experience). AV added that it would also ensure awareness that forensic archaeologists have to do these things themselves in the field, rather than rely on other departments like some larger commercial archaeology companies do. This would be useful knowledge if the delegates were thinking of moving jobs/applying to forensic archaeology jobs in the future.</p> <p>It was clear that this event would need early advertising and clarity on what delegates could expect.</p>	LE
7.	<p><b>CifA2023 FASIG Conference Session</b></p> <p>SK asked if she could share the list of presenters and presentation titles on social media. LE will send SK the information to post on Twitter.</p> <p>LE has planned to set up a backup hotspot in case of poor WiFi during the conference session and will run powerpoints from another Zoom session if needed.</p>	LE, SK
8.	<p><b>Social Media Platforms: Facebook and Mastodon (pros &amp; cons, member-only access?)</b></p> <p>DH suggested that it may be best if the Facebook and Mastodon platforms are public, as the FASIG committee does not have SIG member details to regulate membership on these social media groups. DR agrees, and together with RJ, highlights that a LinkedIn page would be a great idea.</p> <p><i>DH will set up FASIG Facebook and Mastodon pages</i></p>	DH
9.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The new Forensic Science Regulator code has now been published (AV, RJ).</p> <p>The previous draft had raised concerns because Forensic Archaeology (FA) had not been mentioned at all, yet incident scene examination descriptions sounded like they included FA. The EP had provided a consultation response to draw attention to this and to highlight FA's understanding with the previous Forensic Regulator that FA did not need UKAS accreditation due to having their own standards and guidance.</p> <p>The published version is similar to the draft but has a separate document stating that FA is excluded from this code. An FA expert witness would need to quote from this document to prove in court that FA is not operating outside accreditation.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Date of next committee meeting and future events</b></p>	

	<p>Regarding future events, RJ suggested a mid-autumn activity/event to keep active. Examples include an open meeting, lecture, workshop, etc. Considering FASIG's size and position, an appropriate aim would be around three events per year.</p> <p>SK mentioned that the AGM is open to all FASIG members, and RJ suggested that the AGM should still have an activity/event tacked on to it to attract people to attend. Previously, AGMs had often been held within the CifA annual conferences.</p> <p><i>SK will send out a poll to committee members for summer meeting availability.</i></p>	<p>SK</p>
--	--	-----------